

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION SINCE 1877

## Abedini release a 'top priority'



PRESIDENT TO MEET WITH NAGHMEH ABEDINI  
PRESIDENT'S SCHEDULE FOR HIS VISIT TO BOISE  
NAGHMEH PREPARES ROAD RESTRICTIONS FIRST ALERT WEATHER

**ADVOCATING FOR SAEED** — Spectators rally on Jan. 21 outside Boise State University in Idaho for the release of American pastor Saeed Abedini, who is being held under harsh conditions in an Iranian prison. U.S. President Barack Obama met with Saeed's wife Naghmeh during a stop in Boise to make a speech and tour the university's innovative New Product Development Lab. (Video capture courtesy of Baptist Press)

## President Obama promises pastor's family, 'I will try'

**BOISE, Idaho (BP)** — Seeking the release of American pastor Saeed Abedini from an Iranian prison remains a "top priority," U.S. President Barack Obama told Abedini's wife during a private 10-min-

ute meeting with her and her children Jan. 21 at Boise State University in Idaho.

Obama pledged to seek Saeed Abedini's release with renewed energy.

"He was holding my hand

the whole time," said Abedini's wife, Naghmeh. "I could see that he cared in his eyes and he kept getting that across, that he cares, and he's doing what he can," she said during a radio interview with American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ) Executive Director Jordan Sekulow.

see ABEDINI on p. 8

## JOINING TOGETHER



Jim Futral (standing at lectern), executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, addresses Mississippi legislators and select convention board employees during the annual Legislative Prayer Breakfast sponsored earlier this month by the Christian Action Commission in the chapel of the Baptist Building in downtown Jackson. In addition to the message from Futral, attendees joined in prayer for guidance during the 2015 session which began the first week in January. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

## Moore: Repubs guilty of 'moral cowardice' in dumping abortion ban

**WASHINGTON (BP)** — Republicans in the U.S. House of Representatives were guilty of "moral cowardice" when they canceled a scheduled vote on a bill to ban late-term abortions, the Southern Baptist Convention's lead ethicist said.

On the eve of the annual March for Life, held each year in the nation's capital to protest legalized abortion, House GOP leaders abandoned their plan to vote on the Pain-capable Unborn Child Protection Act, H.R. 36.

"I am disgusted by this act of moral cowardice," said Russell Moore, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) in Nashville. "If the House Republicans cannot pass something as basic as restricting the abortion of five-month, pain-capable unborn children, what can they get done?"

The Republicans in Congress should come and explain this atrocity to the hundreds of thousands of people gathering here in the nation's capital to march for life," he said in an ERLC news release late Jan. 21. "The congressional Republicans seem to think that pro-lifers will be satisfied with Ronald Reagan rhetoric and Nancy Pelosi results. They are quite wrong."

Moore continued his criticism of House Republicans Jan. 22 during an event in Washington, D.C., shortly before the March for Life. Describing the proposal as a "reasonable, moderate bill," he told the pro-life audience, "This isn't a radical move, and the House Republicans became scared and showed a complete lack of moral conviction and competence."

While a pro-life renaissance is occurring at the grass-roots level, "We still have politicians that are trembling and shaking over ghosts from the past instead of dealing with reality as it is," Moore said.

According to a November 2014 survey by Quinnipiac University, 60% of Americans (59% of women and 57% of adults ages 18-29) favor the legislation.

Other pro-life leaders joined Moore in expressing their discontent with the House's failure to vote on the bill. The National Right to Life Committee (NRLC) was "profoundly disappointed" the vote was postponed.

The new Republican majority in the U.S. Senate is also



"If the House Republicans cannot pass something as basic as restricting the abortion of five-month, pain-capable unborn children, what can they get done?"

Russell Moore

president of the  
Southern Baptist Ethics  
& Religious Liberty  
Commission (ERLC)

seeking to pass the pain-capable ban, but the White House already has signaled its opposition to the measure. Obama administration officials indicated in a Jan. 21 policy statement they would recommend the president veto the legislation if passed by both houses of Congress.

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# From the editor

WILLIAM PERKINS

## An American reflection

You may have noticed that we are in the midst of Super Bowl Week 2015. Anyone with a newspaper subscription, television set, radio receiver, or Internet connection couldn't help but notice, right?

I'm not talking about the actual game, which has become a minor, inconsequential part of it all. I'm talking about the master marketing strokes that have stretched the event into a nearly month-long American cultural extravaganza and source of international fascination.

It's come a long way since the days when the "AFL-NFL World Championship Game," as the first two Super Bowls were known, couldn't sell out the Los Angeles Coliseum at \$12 per ticket and a college band or two performed at halftime. Now we have giant stadiums hosting an impressive assemblage of convict/athletes, deadbeat dads, trash talkers, and abusers of women — all excused for their physical prowess.

There are the self-absorbed talking heads on ubiquitous sports cable channels providing 24-hour coverage of the big show; the inscrutable, multi-million-dollar commercials during the game; the nouveau riche in their fancy stadium sky boxes; and the shirtless, raving fanatics with painted chests in the "cheap" seats (ticket face value: \$800-\$1900).

The Super Bowl hysteria each year is a near-perfect reflection of modern American culture, isn't it? Shouldn't it make us all walk a little taller knowing that well over a billion people worldwide will be tuned in to this perverse snapshot of our country? Doesn't it make one burst with pride to know all those people will be watching the near-constant glorification of alcohol consumption along with wardrobe malfunctions, phallic-shaped musical instruments, and assorted other general vulgarities?

This year, we have the added controversy of outright cheating. (Yes, it is a big deal.) How will the NFL handle the case of the deflated footballs, apparently designed to give one team an unfair

advantage during the playoffs? Will the leaders of the guilty team continue to be able to laugh it off and deflect responsibility? Will they be allowed to hold high the championship trophy, if they win? What will be the message to the millions of young people watching the game, who will take a moral cue from how this scandal is handled?

It's not just the Super Bowl, and it's not just sports in general. We point with pride and flock to art exhibitions that showcase a crucifix submerged in urine and the Virgin Mary covered in elephant manure. We sit hour after mesmerizing hour in front of our televisions and movie screens, absorbing coarse behavior, scatological humor, and double entendres about body parts and sexual habits, all in high definition and surround sound.

Is it any wonder that the rest of the world has no respect for the United States? How could they? We have become a country of flabby, aimless pagans who are committed to nothing more than seeking amusement for a brief while through the lowest possible forms of entertainment.

The Romans are remembered in part for such extravagant indulgences in the last years of their existence. Like Americans of today, the Romans allowed themselves to become the disinterested and unsophisticated inhabitants of the most educated and powerful nation in the world. They comported themselves in this manner until there was nothing left, and the Barbarians, finding no one interested in challenging them, simply walked across unguarded borders and into the Roman heartland.

It doesn't have to be that way. Change can start with the power of one person, humbling himself/herself in repentance and praying to the one true God for delivery. One person standing up for what is right and resisting the depravity of the world. One person, striving every day of life, every second of life, to honor Jesus Christ. That's the power of one.

Lord, please send revival, and let it be soon.

# 42 years, and still counting

It's been a lifetime, the better part of 40 years, since I heard Francis Schaeffer and C. Everett Koop explain the horrors wrought on unborn children by our culture's sexual revolution. I'd never heard any of this in church or in ethics classes, nor had I noticed it in the news — at least not in these terms at the Tarrant County Convention Center here in Texas.

It is to our shame that it took years after *Roe v. Wade* for evangelicals, particularly Southern Baptists, to realize what we'd allowed to happen.

Since those days, millionaire abortionists have risen and declined. Even many of the unsaved now see abortion at any stage and for any reason as monstrous. It is a right that many defend but in which only the shameless glory. Yes, there are shameless people, and many of them are politicians, but abortion clinics are closing.

In my adult life, the "women's health issue" has been put to shame by quiet, praying volunteers at pregnancy resource centers around the country. Without public money and a decent return on investment, abortion clinics close. Without public money and any return on financial investments, pregnancy resource clinics expand and multiply.

The legal landscape has to some degree reflected growing public distaste for the extremes of the abortion lobby. The activists and profiteers know that any limitation, even on the killing of fully formed and viable children in the wombs of girls too young to legally drive a car, undermines the mythology they preach. Average citizens, and many state lawmakers, are not deeply concerned about the financial consequences that reasonable regulation might have on the fortunes of ghouls.

But *Roe v. Wade* still stands, and public opinion is more quickly changed than legal precedent. Young women still have what were formerly called "problem pregnancies" and lack adequate family or community support. That won't end. The drift of fallen humanity will always be away from righteous sexual behavior and personal responsibility.

Our families and our churches will still need to support pregnancy centers, then. These outposts provide food, diapers, furniture, counseling, and nurture to tens of thousands of young women (and their guys) each year. Thousands will confess Christ as Lord each year as a result of the ministry and witness these centers provide.

If *Roe v. Wade* was overturned tomorrow, we'd still need these ministries. The government will not fund them because they



**Guest opinion**  
with Gary Ledbetter

are too controversial. Those with a profit motive will never help them because they are the purest benevolence. This must continue to be one of those things we'd never do for money but will do for love.

Frustrating as it can be, we must continue to advocate for laws that protect life. There will always be challenges to existing regulations by many with venal motives and some with a misbegotten but sincere desire to help women.

Technology will move so that existing laws don't address the things we can someday do. For example, the amazing progress of medical arts to keep ever-younger babies alive outside the womb has impacted the pro-life movement in the past 20 years. The movement for embryo-destructive stem cell research is another thing that we wouldn't have predicted when the *Roe v. Wade* decision was handed down.

Additionally, the strange "we favor the right to abort, but we also love babies" mentality of American society will always leave bizarre contradictions in the law. When a person kills a pregnant woman, how many "people" has he caused to die? *Roe v. Wade* will not allow us to treat the unborn child as a person with rights separate from his mother, but it seems to allow us to protect him from nearly every other person. We who believe in God, the giver of life, must be on hand to help tip the scales toward the value of every human life as lawmakers try to unsnarl knotted legal problems we've created.

Always, we have a prophetic role to a nation too often mindless of revealed truth. For the sake of the unborn innocent and for the sake of a guilty nation racking up ever more guilt by what we allow, approve, and even bless, we must be light bearers in our communities.

There are many ways we can do that but really no way we can justify ignoring the worst thing our generation has done.

*Ledbetter is editor in chief of the Southern Baptist TEXAN ([www.texanonline.net](http://www.texanonline.net)), newsjournal of the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention in Dallas.*

## THE Baptist Record

### Editor

William H. Perkins Jr.  
[wperkins@mbcb.org](mailto:wperkins@mbcb.org)

### Associate Editor

Tony Martin  
[tmartin@mbcb.org](mailto:tmartin@mbcb.org)

### Layout/Design

Megan Young  
[myoung@mbcb.org](mailto:myoung@mbcb.org)

### Advertising

Emily Jones  
[ejones@mbcb.org](mailto:ejones@mbcb.org)

### Circulation Manager

Brenda Quattlebaum  
[bquattlebaum@mbcb.org](mailto:bquattlebaum@mbcb.org)

### Editor Emeritus

Don McGregor



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**Baptist Record**  
**Advisory Committee:**  
Dwayne Parker, Flora  
Paul Sims, Pontotoc  
Barry Burns, Terry  
Carl White, Meridian  
Billie Buckley, Petal  
Russell Mord, Sturgis

**Postmaster:**  
Send changes of address to: The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530.  
Tel: (601) 968-3800  
Fax: (601) 292-3330  
E-mail: [baptistrecord@mbcb.org](mailto:baptistrecord@mbcb.org)

# Book scandal brings warnings on visions of heaven

**NASHVILLE (BP and local reports)** — The decision by LifeWay Christian Resources to stop selling a discredited book about a six-year-old's supposed vision of heaven is being cited as a reminder that followers of Jesus should rely on the Bible for their knowledge of the afterlife.

"Anytime you step away from the clear, revelatory, propositional statements of Scripture into your own experience, then you open yourself to every kind of weird existential idea out there," Chris Osborne, a Texas pastor who believes books like Malarkey's are unbiblical, told Baptist Press. "We want people bound to truth, not to what they feel or what they think they saw or what they experience."

## 'I did not die.'

LifeWay decided Jan. 15 that it would stop selling *The Boy Who Came Back from Heaven*, by the father-son team of Kevin and Alex Malarkey. Alex, now 16, said in a statement that he fabricated the supposed vision of heaven on which the bestselling book is based.

"I did not die. I did not go to Heaven," Alex wrote in an open letter to LifeWay and other book retailers.

"I said I went to heaven because I thought it would get me attention. When I made the claims that I did, I had never read the Bible. People have profited from lies, and continue to. They should read the Bible, which is enough. The Bible is the only source of truth. Anything written by man cannot be infallible," Alex wrote.

LifeWay spokesman Marty King said in a statement released to Baptist Press, "LifeWay was informed last week that Alex Malarkey retracted his testimony about visiting heaven as told in the book *The Boy Who Came Back from Heaven*. Therefore, we returned to the publisher the few copies we had in our stores. LifeWay is committed to becoming even more proactive the next few months in evaluating the resources we carry."

The web site for the book has apparently been taken down. The book is still available at Amazon and other secular retailers.

In 2004, Alex spent two months in a coma and was paralyzed from the neck down following a car accident. When he awoke, he reported experiencing a vision of heaven that included being guided by angels and meeting Jesus.

Alex's father said he "felt no urge" to share his son's story for five years, but he retained an agent and secured a book deal with Tyndale House Publishers in 2009, British newspaper The Guardian reported. Though Alex is listed as a coauthor, Kevin is the sole owner of the copyright, according to information posted in the United States Copyright Office's public catalog.

Kevin also owns the copyright for the film version of *The Boy Who Came Back from Heaven*, and for a Spanish version of the book.

Alex's mother Beth Malarkey, who Christianity Today reported is separated from Kevin, has been writing on her blog since at least 2011 that the book contains inaccuracies, according to the Guardian.

Beth has also said she and Alex have not received any proceeds from the book's sale, Christianity Today reported.

Tyndale announced in a Jan. 14 statement that it would "immediately put the book and all ancillary products into out-of-print status" and allow retailers to return their remaining inventory.

## SBC action

Last June, messengers to the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) adopted a resolution that touted "the sufficiency of Scripture regarding the afterlife" and warned Christians not to allow "the numerous books and movies purporting to explain or describe the afterlife experience" to "become their source and basis for an understanding of the afterlife."

Though the resolution did

not list specific book or movie titles, it seemed to describe works like *The Boy*

*Who Came Back from Heaven*; *90*

*Minutes in Heaven* by Don Piper (an ordained Southern Baptist minister); and *Heaven Is for Real* by Todd Burpo, about his son Carlton's experience which was made into a companion hit movie released last year by Sony Pictures.

The resolution affirmed "the sufficiency of biblical revelation over subjective experiential explanations to guide one's understanding of the truth about heaven and hell."

## Information incomplete

Osborne, who was a member of the SBC Resolutions Committee that proposed the resolution to the convention, believes the Apostle Paul's statement in 2 Corinthians 12:4 that he heard things during a vision of "paradise"

which "a man is not allowed to speak" precludes anyone from describing a vision of heaven not in the Bible.

Although Scripture says much about where believers will live following Christ's second coming, it contains far less information about what occurs between the time a follower of Jesus dies and the Lord's second coming, said Osborne, pastor of Central Church in College Station, Texas.

Still, God has given humans all the information they need about what happens after death, he added.

Theologians refer to the condition of believers between their deaths and Christ's return as the "intermediate state."

"There are several things I know about the intermediate state," Osborne said, citing John 14:2-4. "Number one, Jesus comes and gets

me and takes me there... There's obviously a place that He's built for me there and [I will go there] immediately upon my death."

Osborne speculated that the lack of information in Scripture about the intermediate state may be one factor driving well-meaning believers to study books about near-death experiences for clues.

"The lack of explanation in the Scripture causes people to create things that are not true," Osborne said.

## Lay hold of truth

Matthew Arbo, another member of the Resolutions Committee that proposed the statement on books about heaven, told BP that Christians should not worry about what will happen to them during the intermediate state even though it is "kind of a mystery."

"We have the word from Jesus on the cross, 'This day you will be with me in paradise,' said Arbo, assistant professor of biblical and theological studies at Oklahoma Baptist University. "We should just lay hold of that truth and trust that as God worked all things together for our good in our salvation and in our calling, so also He will do the same thing in our death."

Jesus' promise that the thief on the cross would be in paradise the day of his death (Luke 23:43) and Paul's statement that "to be out of the body" is to be "at home with the Lord" (2 Corinthians 5:8) demonstrate that Christians' souls will go to heaven immediately when they die, Arbo said.

Believers' bodies will remain in the grave until they are raised, perfected, and reunited with their souls at Christ's Second Coming, he noted.

The lack of detail in Scripture regarding the intermediate state should not drive believers to depend on fanciful portrayals in either secular or Christian media for information, Arbo said. Books like Malarkey's are "kind of an interesting juxtaposition to pop culture portrayals of death — vampire series, *An American Horror Story* — that are kind of morbid and nihilistic. They're really bleak, and then you get these hits that aren't quite so reductive and so defeating."

"It's kind of understandable why somebody might fix onto that. There's so very little that's hopeful in pop culture today."

I was driving down the highway one day and had the radio on. I really wasn't listening to it. It was just kind of low background noise. I was not talking to anyone on the phone. I was not texting while driving. I was not engaged in anything but looking out of the windshield to see where I was going. Suddenly, the conversation on the radio caught my attention because of the subject that had come forward. I did not know who the person was. She was a female singer from Canada who had released a new album and that was the purpose of the interview.

She had written many of the songs on the album, and she was talking about the nature of the music and the subject matter. The featured song of the group was the one that had gotten the most traction and play. The interviewer was asking about that song. It was at that point that the interview became more interesting to me because she said that in the song she had used the "G" word. The "G" word, I thought. It is strange how many words we cannot use and do not use because of political correctness or the fact that they may be vulgar or trashy in nature. I understand that, but I did not know what the "G" word was, but the more she talked I realized that she was talking about God though she would not say God.

Many of the people who helped with her album encouraged her not to use the "G" word. She felt that it needed to be used, and began to explain who she thought or what she thought was represented by the "G" word. She said that she was not talking about some male figure that she was supposed to obey or do whatever pleased him. She was talking about the creative, superior intelligence that exists in each of us. She talked about her concept of God. She said each one of us has a representation and centeredness of that being and she rejected the biblical

**Directions**

With Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer  
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

## The "G" Word

kind of picture of a loving God that created us and loves us.

My mind moved toward the thoughts of Romans 1 when Paul said, "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and to four-footed beasts, and creeping things" (vs. 22-23). While she seemed to be an intelligent person and articulate, it was obvious that she had created a god for herself and celebrated that god within her own abilities, her own genius, and her own thoughts. My immediate feelings were sadness that this no doubt gifted person had only discovered the god of her own making. She had totally missed the wonder of the mighty God who cares for her, brought her into existence and desires to have a relationship with her. But still, in a kind of arrogant and somewhat boastful and even belligerent way she had gone ahead and used in her song the "G" word in spite of what people might think.

It is a sad day when the great God of all creation is relegated to a representation letter because our world wants nothing to

do with Him. While I thought about how she wanted to celebrate God as the creativity within her, I also thought about all of us. People have always wanted to make God into what they want God to be so that He will think like them, act and react like them and have the same desires, goals and dislikes that they have. They shape Him into some philosophical look that even in many places and in many times becomes a work of art whether carved out of wood, molded from clay, or even shaped into a golden image with their own hands. They create what they think God is like.

Most of the time, it is done with trappings of philosophy, high-mindedness and with a streak of rebellion that rejects the God who is, in order to shape the god they want. It is a never ending kind of search and struggle. The Apostle Paul was familiar with that kind of pervasive and perverted idea of God in culture for he himself had walked down that road at Mars Hill in Acts 17. He saw the statues and the representations of God in that setting. They had even created a god that nobody knew about just in case they had missed one. They set up the statue to the unknown god.

Paul walked into the midst of the philosophers and announced that he wanted to tell them about the God that they did not know and that His name was Jesus. All of the people began to gather around and they said, "Let's hear what this babbler has to say. Maybe he has a new idea!" Indeed, he did, for no longer were they going to be able to think that there was an unknown god, a "G" word kind of god. Paul presented a Christ who loved them and could save them from their sins. But, as with so many today, they brushed that aside and rejected his message.

I felt sorry for the lady who was telling that she used the "G" word in her song and could not even call His name. I thought that is the reality and story of us all. From our first parents in the Garden of Eden who ran and hid, to a whole congregation of God's people coming out of Egyptian bondage who decided they would shape a golden calf, to a rich young ruler who would get up and walk away from Jesus because he wanted to hold on to the stuff of the gods of this world, to a disciple who grabbed his 30 pieces of silver rather than God's great gift, to a thief hanging on a cross beside the Savior of the world and rejected Him, it is our story. We do not have to reject Him! He is reaching out to all of us in love, grace and forgiveness. He will save you. He will come and give you life that never ends. You can trust Him right now.

The "G" word is for our God who sent what I guess some people would call the "J" word, His loving Son, Jesus. The Bible says, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved" (Rom. 10:13). Turn from your sins and turn to the Savior. Call on Him right now and you too can say - Praise God.

The author can be contacted at directions@mcb.org.

## Staff Changes



FIRST CHURCH, EUPORA, celebrated the retirement of Anita Russell as children's minister Jan. 11 with a reception. Russell retired after 15 years of service and will continue on as preschool director.



Dave Jones, long-time minister of music in Lafayette County, celebrated his retirement from music ministry with a recognition service at NEW PROSPECT CHURCH, OXFORD, Nov. 30, 2014.



NORTH COLUMBIA CHURCH, COLUMBIA, held a retirement reception for Jim & Kaye Lott on Jan. 11. Lott served for over four years as associate pastor of music and education at North Columbia and spent a total of 43 years in ministry. The church presented Lott with a plaque and he received several gifts from church members and Sunday school classes.

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## The Truth is in the Details

Most of you have heard the idiom, "The Devil is in the Details," which was inspired by an older idiom, "God is in the Details." "The Devil in the Details" refers to a catch or a mysterious element hidden in the details which often creates unintended circumstances. Lately other idioms have surfaced such as, "Government is in the Details," and "The Truth is in the Details." Often we will see the headings, the large print, and the pictures, but neglect to read the small print which often contains the real truth, found only in the details.

The Mississippi legislative session is off and running with hundreds of proposed bills and resolutions already placed into consideration by the House and the Senate members. You will read about these bills in the newspapers, view them being discussed on the nightly news, and listen to legislators debate them on talk radio programs. But be warned, "The Truth is in the Details." I will share a few bills that the CAC will watch carefully and some that might be of general interest.

Perhaps the major issue for this session will be the education of our children. Initiative 42 and 42-a will be on your ballot in November. Initiative 42, which is a constitutional amendment, states "To protect each child's fundamental right to educational opportunity, the State shall provide for the establishment, maintenance and support of an adequate and efficient system of free public schools. The chancery courts of this State shall have the power to enforce this section with appropriate injunctive relief." In November this Constitutional amendment will not be on the ballot as stated above. Initiative 42 will appear as a question, "Should the state be required to provide for the establishment, maintenance and support of an adequate and efficient system of free public schools?"

Everyone who loves ice cream, baseball, and apple pie would have to vote yes. Sure we believe all of our kids deserve a free public school. But what you will not see on your ballot is educational funding is taken from the legislators



with Jimmy Porter

and placed into the hands of the chancery courts. This is not just about MAEP funding but more about who is going to have oversight of the educational process in our state. Will it be your legislator or a chancery judge? Initiative 42-a will also be on the ballot. It has the endorsement of both chambers, since they wrote it, and it leaves the funding and oversight to the legislature. Also the important words "adequate education" are not a part of the legislature's Initiative 42-a. Will a judge or the legislature define "adequate education"? The truth is in the details, so read carefully and vote wisely.

Remaining with education, the standards for Common Core have also come under fire. There will be debates and possible laws designed to improve or perhaps remove Common Core altogether. There could possibly be a study committee named to evaluate the program and make recommendations to improve the standards. Watch for the details. Several other bills referencing education are on the table for discussion.

There is a bill entered which will make the Bible the state book of Mississippi. This bill will have opposition just like last year when our Governor proposed putting "In God We Trust" on our state seal. It will be seen as a waste of time and useless, but do let your legislator know how you feel about it. It will be misunderstood by the media as was the "Religious Freedom Restoration Act" last year. They screamed we were trying to discriminate against the homo-sexual community in spite of a clear understanding of the law. As far as I know, not one person has been discriminated against since RFRA became law.

There are numerous bills aimed at making it unlawful to text and drive, and talking on the phone while driving without a hands free device. Gambling bills have been introduced to provide for a statewide lottery with the proceeds going toward free tuition for qualifying students attending our college and universities. The truth of this bill might be found in the definition of a qualifying student.

The session is early and many more important bills will surface. Pray for our legislators and their families as this is a very stressful time in their lives. Our Governor, Lt. Governor, and Speaker of the House solicit our prayers. They are sincere in wanting to serve and do what is best for Mississippi. The best we can do for them is to pray for them and if so moved, write them a note of encouragement.

If you have questions about certain bills, the Christian Action Commission issues you an invitation to call and we will do our best to help you find answers to those questions. Contact us at 601-292-3329 (toll free 1-800-748-1651).

Porter serves as executive director-treasurer for the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission. He can be contacted at 601-292-3332 or jporter@christianaction.com.

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NWHU KDR ZUIR TS JWSM, OLR NWHU

OUUK IWVRCWA CK RNU AWJ.

TWAWENC RJD:KCKU

*Clue: N = H*

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Zechariah 14:1

By Charles Marx, 1932-2004, © 2005

### MS POSITIONS

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF EUPORA IS SEEKING A PART-TIME CHILDREN'S MINISTER. Please send resumes to FBC Eupora, P.O. Box 268, Eupora, MS 39744 or email resumes to firstbaptistc57@bellsouth.net. For more information, call the church office at (662) 258-3491.

LIBERTY BAPTIST CHURCH, LIBERTY, MS IS ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR A MINISTER OF MUSIC. Please send resumes to PC Box 73 Liberty, MS 39645, or email to bgeno@libertybaptistchurch.biz.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, COLLINS, IS SEEKING A FULL-TIME MINISTRY ASSISTANT with experience in Quickbooks, business, and other church-related software. Anyone with such experience who is interested in this position may call the church at 601-765-6279 or e-mail the church at secretary@fbcollins.com.

STRONG RIVER BAPTIST CHURCH IN PINOLA, MS IS ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR THE POSITION OF BI-VOCATIONAL PASTOR. Please send resumes to Gene Farmer at 209 Katie Bush Rd Pinola, MS 39049

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FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF SUMRALL, MISS., SEEKS FULL-TIME MINISTER TO CHILDREN/DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES. Bachelor's degree required (seminary preferred); prior experience working with children and in congregational or organizational setting required (experience as children's minister or equivalent preferred). Send resume and cover letter to office@fbcsunrall.org.

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FBC MENDENHALL IS ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR A MINISTER OF MUSIC. Please send resume to PO Box 366 Mendenhall, MS 39114, or email to swarren@fbcmendenhall.org

## Just for the Record



Youth and parents from **IMMANUEL CHURCH, GREENWOOD**, attended the Xtreme Winter Conference in Gatlinburg, Tenn.



**CARROLLTON CHURCH, CARROLLTON**, honored George Smith with the title of Pastor Emeritus, on Nov. 30, 2014. The day celebrated Smith's 50 years in the ministry. Shown on the right presenting the certificate is George Hays, chairman of the deacons. Fletcher Moorman is pastor.



The G.A.s and Acteens of **SHILOH CHURCH, SONTAG**, along with their leaders and missions director Gloria Ervin utilized a used shoe drive for missions, collecting 225 pairs of shoes.



**VANILLA CHURCH, MONTICELLO**, served a meal to the students of the Copiah-Lincoln Community College BSU. Shown are Rick Davis, pastor Lee Falter, Sarah Lee, Co-Lin BSU Director Bruce Brady, and Tim Lea.



**STRONG RIVER CHURCH, PINOLA**, recently celebrated paying off their new sanctuary with a note burning. Shown is pastor Roger Lee with the building committee and guest.

**MID SOUTH  
MEN'S BIBLE CONFERENCE**

February 27-28, 2015  
Faith Baptist Church  
Bartlett, Tennessee

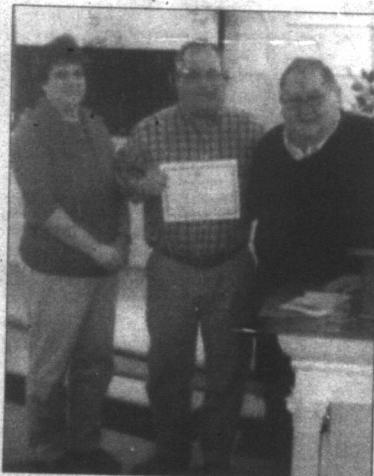
Vance Pitman      Ronnie Floyd      Kevin Hamm

Assemblies of God      Assemblies of God      First Baptist Church  
President, First Baptist Church      President, First Baptist Church      Bartlett, Tennessee

Faith Celebration Choir & Orchestra  
Sung by Terry Taylor  
Arranged by Roger Moore & Wesley Williams  
First Baptist Church of Bartlett, TN

Go to [myfaithbaptist.org](http://myfaithbaptist.org)  
for registration and information.

## Just for the Record



The WAYNE COUNTY ASSOCIATION WMU sponsored the 5th annual Ladies/Teen Girls Prayer/Tea Jan. 11. Big Creek Church hosted the meeting and provided the tea for the 67 attendees. Wendy Rogers, missionary to Chile, speaker.

**FIRST CHURCH, ITTA BENA,** ordained Donald Fulgham as deacon. Shown are Tammy Fulgham, Fulgham, and Higdon Herrington.

**FIRST CHURCH, NEW ALBANY,** recently ordained Brian Childs and Travis Wiseman as deacons. Shown are Cindy Childs, Childs, pastor Greg Spencer, Wiseman, and Rebekah Wiseman.

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## College News



Charles Pickering Sr., of Taylorsville, and Jody Fail, of Bay Springs, will lead the **WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY** Board of Trustees as chair and vice chair respectively in 2015. Pictured (from left) are Scott Hummel, WCU provost and secretary of the Board of Trustees; Fail; Pickering; and Tommy King, WCU president.

### In other College News:

► Five **William Carey University** art students, including Amber Holifield of Collins, Joanna McKenzie of Monticello, Melissa Murphy of Bay Springs, Rick Wilemon of Hattiesburg and Tessa Stockstill of Biloxi, were selected to display their work at the Arts Center of Mississippi by being named winners of the Mississippi Collegiate Art Competition. A total of 138 pieces from higher education institutions throughout the state will be on display at the Arts Center from February 7 through March 13, including seven pieces from the WCU students.

## CLASSIFIEDS

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**Steve Roark**

member of the American Association Of Christian COUNSELORS and in the referral network for Focus on the Family

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- I have been married for 37 years

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## ABEDINI

cont. from p. 1

"My son asked him to bring him back, bring daddy back for his birthday, which is in March, and he looked up and he looked at my son and he said, 'I will try Jacob, I will try,'" Naghmeh said.

She credited God for arranging the meeting to allow her to seek her husband's release and to proclaim God's love and power. "God had me in that room, not only to go before the king as Esther did and plead for a cause, but also to touch his heart," Naghmeh said in an interview with CBN, referencing Queen Esther of the Old Testament.

"I know I was sent as God's ambassador to touch the president's heart with God's love, the love of Jesus, and those were accomplished; so I have hope for the next steps because God is in control," she said.

"He will show me," she said of God. "He will take me through the next steps. I know there [are] great things to come and I can't wait to have Saeed home with our family."

Naghmeh has been advocating more than two years for the release of her husband, who has been held since Sept. 26, 2012, because of his Christian faith. He was sentenced Jan. 27, 2013, to eight years in prison on charges he threatened national security by planting house churches in Iran years earlier, and had been under house arrest since July, 2012.

Saeed is a native of Iran and a naturalized American citizen. Prior to his arrest, he traveled to Iran on a frequent basis to visit extended family and work on construction projects such as orphanages.

Naghmeh met with Obama

"I just looked at [Obama] and said the kids and I love you and we pray for you, and as soon as I said that, the wall all came down, and he just grabbed my hand and I said, 'I don't know if it's a professional thing to say or not,' and he smiled and he said, 'Yes, I need your prayers.'

### Naghmeh Abedini

### Saeed Abedini's wife

on the two-year anniversary of the opening day of Saeed's trial.

"I just looked at [Obama] and said the kids and I love you and we pray for you," she said on CBN, "and as soon as I said that, the wall all came down, and he just grabbed my hand and I said, 'I don't know if it's a professional thing to say or not,' and he smiled and he said, 'Yes, I need your prayers.'

"It was very personal, and I just felt like sharing God's love with him."

Obama arranged a telephone interview between Naghmeh and U.S. State Department staff after the meeting. U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry has advocated for Saeed's release during past visits to Iran.

"For me, that meant we're on the same team, let's take the next step necessary to get Saeed home," she said of Obama arranging the interview with State Department staff, "especially when Jacob asked to have daddy for his birthday."

Naghmeh asked Christians to continue praying for her husband's release. "More than anything, I've been motivated to even pray more, and to ask the body of Christ to join me in praying more," she said on CBN.

"I'm thankful for everyone who is praying, the churches that are praying that are really supporting and standing with us. We couldn't have done it without you. We're going to bring Saeed home. We continue to pray."

The meeting heightens the fight for Saeed's release, ACLJ's Sekulow said. ACLJ is representing Naghmeh in the push to have her husband released.

"It personalizes it for the president but on top of that, it changes the staff's perspective — the people who are doing the day-to-day on this at the White House and the State Department — because the president has made it a priority and he's also elevated this nationally by not only doing this meeting, but doing it right after the State of the Union address."

More than 206,000 have signed a two-month-old ACLJ petition urging Obama not to make any diplomatic deals with Iran unless Saeed is released. Saeed's father visited him in prison on the same day Naghmeh met with Obama, and reported that Saeed is still suffering.

Credible reports and Saeed's own letters smuggled out of prison indicate that he has been tortured extensively, denied food and medical care, and is considered untouchable by his Muslim captors because he is a Christian.

"He still has a lot of pain. Of course, he's in one of the worst prisons in the world," Naghmeh said. "The nutrition is horrible. The conditions are horrible."

## Truth is not relative.

Find it in the One who is the way, truth, and life.

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life.

From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

*"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)*

If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Southern Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

## OBITUARY

Oliver Clarence Ladnier passed away on January 19 at his home in Vicksburg. He was 86.

He was born in Pascagoula on December 4, 1928 to Oliver Benton Ladnier and Hannah A. Couch Ladnier. He was a graduate of Pascagoula High School, Mississippi College, and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He was on the staff at Calvary Church in Jackson from 1951-1957 and his pastorates include Carmel Church in Monticello from 1957-1960, North McComb Church in McComb from 1960-1970, and First Church in Magee, MS from 1970-1995, at which point he retired. He also served as interim pastor at White Oak Church in Smith County, Bovina Church in Vicksburg, Goodrum Church in Vicksburg, Woodlawn Church in Vicksburg, Eagle Lake Church in Eagle Lake, Wayside Church in Vicksburg, Oakland Church in Vicksburg, and Grace Church in Vicksburg.

He held many association and state positions, including moderator for Pike, Simpson, and Warren Associations, Clerk for Lawrence, Pike, and Simpson Associations, Convention Board Member from Pike and Simpson Associations, Secretary for MBCB Executive Committee, Vice President of the Mississippi

Baptist Foundation, Specialist for the Mississippi Baptist Brotherhood Department, Promotional Speaker for the Baptist Record, Program Chairman for the Mississippi Baptist Annual Meeting, and Member of the Feasibility Study Committee for the Gulfshore Baptist Assembly Building Project.

He was a member of First Church in Vicksburg.

Along with his parents, he was preceded in death by his son-in-law, Tom McGraw. He is survived by his wife, Patsy Doss, of Mobile, Ala., whom he married on Nov. 21, 1948; his daughters, Linda (Dan) Johnson and Brenda (Chris) McNeese; sisters, Janet Hill and Vicki Broadus; aunt, Bonnie Barton; grandchildren, Danielle (Brian) DeHuff, Zach (Jessica) Johnson, and Beau (Rebecca) Johnson; and great-grandchildren, Johnson DeHuff, Knox DeHuff, Rivers DeHuff, Delta DeHuff, Cameron Johnson, Hayden Johnson, Amelia-Kate Johnson, and Graham Johnson. Funeral services were at Glenwood Funeral Home in Vicksburg on January 21 at 2:00 P.M. with Jim Hess officiating. Graveside services were at 2:00 P.M. on Thursday at Griffin Cemetery in Moss Point.

## Submission Guidelines

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published.

Preferred method: news may be submitted electronically to the e-mail address below, and must be included in the message segment of an e-mail form. Secondary method: news may be typewritten or neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper and mailed. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone. Due to ever-present virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments in JPEG format are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs must be submitted electronically via e-mail, as attachments in JPEG format. Hard copy photographs mailed through the postal service will not be accepted. Photographs must be clear, sharp, and well-lit. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. Photographs containing inappropriate gestures and objectionable clothing will not be published. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items that do not reproduce well on newsprint are generally not publishable.

There is no guarantee that news items and/or photographs will be published, and unsolicited material will not be acknowledged or returned. All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date. Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. These guidelines are not meant to be exhaustive.

Submit news to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530, FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mcb.org.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS FOR FEBRUARY 1, 2015

### Do Your Appointed Part • Nehemiah 7:1-8

#### Introduction

Thirty-eight years ago, William Morrow and Company published a book of lists simply titled *The Book of Lists*. 521 pages! It became a New York Times #1 Bestseller on July 24, 1977.

For any person who likes lists, the Book of Nehemiah offers plenty: 3:1-32 (78 names); 7:6-73 (110 names), 8:4 (13 names), 7-8 (13 names); 9:4-5 (16 names); 10:1-27 (87 names); 11:3-36 (80 names); 12:1-26 (104 names), 31-36 (40 names), 40-42 (16 names). Such passages are not just Hebrew pronunciation exercises. The average Bible reader, however, does not appreciate this material.

Fred Craddock taught preaching and New Testament in the Candler School of Theology at Emory University. In a sermon about a list (Rom. 16), he admitted, "I always [told] my students in preaching class, 'When you're preaching from biblical texts, avoid the lists. They're deadly. Don't preach from the lists'" (Sermon: "When the Roll is Called Down Here," Creative Styles of Preaching, 14). Yet, as Craddock unpacked Romans 16, he repeatedly insisted, "Don't call it a list." His analysis and illustrations humanized the names, adding "flesh and blood" to the "bones."

Nehemiah actually knew the people whose names we "butcher." Hence, like Fred Craddock, he would have insisted, "Don't call it a list."

#### Commentary: Nehemiah 7:1-4

In 2013 (March 3) and 2014 (August 3), 60 Minutes reported that China has

been constructing cities without inhabitants, between 12 and 24 every year. Chinese families cannot afford the housing at these sites. The stark images of Ordos and Zhengzhou reveal that a city is more than infrastructure.

When Nehemiah arrived in Judah, Jerusalem had no walls (1:3; 2:11-18), gates (1:3; 2:3, 11-18), or homes (7:4). Rebuilding the city was merely a means to a greater end: namely, repopulating it (7:4).

Jerusalem needed security to be inhabitable. Therefore, Nehemiah and his fellow workers (see the list of their names in chap. 3) reconstructed its walls and repaired its twelve gates: Valley (2:13, 15), Refuse (2:13; 3:13-14, 12:31), Fountain (2:14; 3:15;

12:37), Sheep (3:1, 32; 12:39), Fish (3:3; 12:39), Old (3:6; 12:39), Water (3:26; 8:1, 13, 16; 12:37), Horse (3:28), East (3:29), Inspection (3:31), Ephraim (8:16; 12:39), and Guard (12:39). Nehemiah then stationed gatekeepers (7:1; see their names in 11:19 and 12:25) at each entrance, thus controlling access.

Jerusalem also needed to provide quality worship because God had caused his name to dwell there (1:8-9).

For any other city, reliable civil services (e.g., water supply, sanitation, good roads) would have been enough. Therefore, Nehemiah deferred to the Levites and the singers (7:1; see their names in 8:7-8; 9:4-5; 10:9-13; 11:15-18).

Chapter eleven honors the Jews who willingly forfeited comforts in order to resettle Jerusalem. They represented ten percent of the Jewish population in Judah (vv. 1-19).

tention), but every part is valuable. Accordingly, American clergyman and writer Edward Everett Hale resolved, "I am only one. But still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something; and because I cannot do everything I will not refuse to do the something that I can do."

#### Commentary: Nehemiah 7:5-7

On November 21, 1976, Roots became a New York Times #1 Bestseller. It also aired as a television miniseries on ABC. Author Alex Haley intrigued America with stories about his ancestors.

Fascination with family history has intensified; no longer just a hobby, it is now big business. Ancestry.com for \$1.6 billion in 2012.

Curiosity does not explain why the Jews kept genealogical records. Verifying one's spiritual purity was compulsory in order to serve God (7:61-65) and to worship him at the temple (13:1-3; see also Dt. 23:2-6).

Good record-keeping, however, did not guarantee good behavior. According to chapter 13, the Jews defiled themselves by marrying pagans, including, ironically, Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite.

*Parke is professor, Department of Christian Studies and Philosophy, Mississippi College, and a member of Morrison Heights Church, Clinton.*



### Explore the Bible

with Ivan Parke

grace on me. Another reason was that the church's sign displayed no other name but mine; even the weekly

bulletin and monthly newsletter omitted more names (faithful volunteers) than they mentioned.

The lists in the Book of Nehemiah prove that one person never does it all. Nehemiah had a lot of help.

In 1 Corinthians 12:12-30, Paul used the human body as a metaphor for the Church. Every Christian is a member of the one body (Eph. 4:4). Some parts may be more visible (getting more at-

### Ready When Sickness Comes to Stay • 2 Corinthians 4:16-18; 12:7-10

"Eat better, live longer; 5 Foods to Avoid; Wellness check-ups paid at 100%; Flu and Pneumonia shots given here." These are just a few slogans which bombard our lives. Our health is important and every day we make decisions regarding it. Genetics, diseases, infections, accidents, lifestyle choices, and the natural process of aging affect our health. Illnesses which brought death in the past are now curable because of advances in medicine. When a person is first diagnosed with a health issue, family and friends rally around to offer support. But for the chronic sufferer, the support and help often diminishes as time progresses. "Ready: ministering life to those with long-term health issues," is the focus of today's lesson.

Our lesson begins with a call for endurance: "Do not lose heart" (2 Cor. 4:1, 16) "The American Heritage Dictionary defines endurance as 'the act, quality, or power of withstanding hardship or stress... Endurance perhaps more strongly adds the idea of continuing under resistance or the adversities of life, to carry on in spite of hardships." Paul was imprisoned, exiled, beaten, stoned, shipwrecked, and so much more, yet he endured (2 Cor. 11:24-27). His focus was not on "the outer self is wasting away;" his focus was on the "inner self is being renewed day by day." The daily goal for all believers is to grow and mature into Christlikeness.

In verse 17, Paul gives a series of contrasts: "light affliction—weight of glory;

momentary—eternal; working against us—working for us. Paul was writing with eternity's values in view. He was weighing the present trials against the future glory and discovered his trials were actually working for him (Rom. 8:18)." Paul ends this chapter with one more contrast, "what is seen and what is unseen." Endurance is based on a person's ability to look beyond the physical to the spiritual; beyond the present to the future, and beyond the visible to the invisible... Pursuing God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the souls of men should consume the believer" (John MacArthur Study Bible).

Second Corinthians 12:7b-9a, covers Paul's thorn in the flesh. We do not know exactly what 'the thorn' was. The word means: "a sharp stake used for torturing or impaling something." Paul "implored/pleaded with the Lord three times that it might leave me." Warren Wiersbe comments that the use of this verb, *buffet*, "indicates that this pain was either constant or recurring." His answer was not found in removing this painful hindrance. Instead the Lord gave him a promise, "My

grace is sufficient for you." Day by day the Lord would continually supply him with grace to endure (1 Cor. 15:10; Phil. 4:13; Col 1:29). Grace is God's loving provision. His grace provided salvation. It is sufficient (2 Cor. 3:4-6). His grace gives us strength. Again Wiersbe writes, "We do not live on explanations; we live on promises...God's promises never change. Promises generate faith and faith strengthens hope."<sup>2</sup> Another thought, believers and non-believers

can endure their sufferings. "God's grace should enable us to rise above our circumstances and feelings

and cause our afflictions to work for us in accomplishing positive good."<sup>2</sup>

Annie Johnson Flint's thorn was arthritis, leaving her as an invalid. She used her long term infirmity to comfort and encourage others. Based upon James 4:6 she wrote: "He giveth more grace when the burdens grow greater; He sendeth more strength when the labors increase; To added affliction He addeth His mercy; To multiplied trials, His multiplied peace... For out of His infinite riches in Jesus, He giveth, and giveth, and giveth again!"<sup>3</sup> This is His sustaining grace.

"Therefore, I am well content with weaknesses...for Christ's sake, for when I am weak then I am strong" (vs 10). Paul's one desire through his sufferings was to exalt Christ. There are six practical lessons we can learn from Paul's experience: "(1) The spiritual is far more important to the dedicated believer than the physical. (2) God knows how to balance burdens and blessings, suffering and glory. (3) Not all sickness is caused by sin. (4) There is something worse than sickness and that is sin; and the worst sin of all is pride. (5) Physical affliction need not be a barrier to effective Christian service. (6) We can always rest in God's Word."<sup>2</sup>

Ministry to an individual with long-term health issues begins with prayer. Add a listening ear, education about the illness, an awareness of long term needs, and encouragement to see God's sufficient grace.

<sup>1</sup> <https://bible.org/seriespage/mark-12-endurance-or-persistence-and-patience>, by J. Hampton Keathley, III

<sup>2</sup> Be Encouraged, Commentary on 2 Corinthians by Warren W. Wiersbe ©1994.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.homecomingmagazine.com/article/he-giveth-more-grace/> by Joy MacKenzie

Leathers is a member of First Church, Madison.

### Bible Studies for Life

with Laura Leathers





## HONOR ROLL OF CHURCHES

Each January, The Baptist Children's Village evaluates the cash gifts received from churches during the previous twelve months. In this evaluation, it has become customary to publish the Mississippi Baptist churches giving \$1,000 and above in descending order of designated cash gifts. This does not include non-cash gift items or volunteer efforts that many churches contribute. This analysis has become known as the "Honor Roll of Churches."

**Dr. Rory Lee, Executive Director**

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RANK	CHURCH NAME	CITY	ASSOCIATION	2014 GIFTS
1	Morrison Heights Baptist Church	Clinton	Metro Baptist Association	\$25,836.23
2	Bunker Hill Baptist Church	Columbia	Marion Baptist Association	\$24,848.70
3	Seminary Baptist Church	Seminary	Cov-Jeff Davis Baptist Assoc	\$21,741.74
4	First Baptist Church Water Valley	Water Valley	Yalobusha Baptist Association	\$20,005.00
5	Oak Grove Baptist Church	Mendenhall	Simone Baptist Association	\$19,978.01
6	First Baptist Church Booneville	Booneville	Prentiss Baptist Association	\$16,129.04
7	First Baptist Church Corinth	Corinth	Alcorn Baptist Association	\$15,649.48
8	Fellowship Baptist Church	Meridian	Lauderdale Baptist Association	\$14,621.44
9	Brandon Baptist Church	Brandon	Rankin Baptist Association	\$14,030.00
10	First Baptist Church Brookhaven	Brookhaven	Lincoln Baptist Association	\$13,666.63
11	First Baptist Church Crystal Springs	Crystal Springs	Copiah Baptist Association	\$13,094.45
12	First Baptist Church Kosciusko	Kosciusko	Attala Baptist Association	\$13,059.07
13	First Baptist Church Richton	Richton	Perry Baptist Association	\$12,808.00
14	Trinity Baptist Church	Waynesboro	Wayne Baptist Association	\$12,718.76
15	Topsway Baptist Church	Bogue Chitto	Lincoln Baptist Association	\$12,300.00
16	Murphy Creek Baptist Church	Loxley	Winston Baptist Association	\$12,000.00
17	Gaston Baptist Church	Booneville	Prentiss Baptist Association	\$11,680.35
18	Williamsville Baptist Church	Kosciusko	Attala Baptist Association	\$10,833.29
19	Memorial Baptist Church	Richton	Perry Baptist Association	\$9,938.04
20	Dry Creek Baptist Church	Mendenhall	Simpson Baptist Association	\$9,874.00
21	First Baptist Church Jackson	Jackson	Metro Baptist Association	\$9,846.43
22	Topeka Baptist Church	Jayess	Lawrence Baptist Association	\$9,340.33
23	First Baptist Church Runnelstown	Petal	Perry Baptist Association	\$9,299.51
24	East Philadelphia Baptist Church	Philadelphia	Neshoba Baptist Association	\$9,185.83
25	First Baptist Church Raymond	Raymond	Metro Baptist Association	\$8,390.00
26	Pine Forest Baptist Church	Collinsville	Lauderdale Baptist Association	\$8,337.41
27	Fine Baptist Church Laurel	Laurel	Jones Baptist Association	\$8,256.66
28	Forest Baptist Church	Forest	Scott Baptist Association	\$8,138.00
29	Fine Baptist Church Magee	Magee	Simpson Baptist Association	\$8,115.28
30	Kosciusko Baptist Church	Rienzi	Alcorn Baptist Association	\$8,106.46
31	Living of Christ Baptist Church	Philadelphia	Neshoba Baptist Association	\$8,028.96
32	Indigo Springs Baptist Church	Laurel	Jones Baptist Association	\$7,954.40
33	Liberty Baptist Church	Liberty	Mississippi Baptist Association	\$7,864.26
34	Holcomb Baptist Church	Holcomb	North Central Baptist Association	\$7,850.00
35	New Hope Baptist Church	Foxworth	Marion Baptist Association	\$7,716.83
36	New Hope Baptist Church	Meridian	Lauderdale Baptist Association	\$7,432.00
37	First Baptist Church Tupelo	Tupelo	Lee Baptist Association	\$7,277.67
38	Trinity Baptist Church	Vicksburg	Metro Baptist Association	\$7,160.53
39	First Baptist Church Clinton	Clinton	Panola County Baptist Association	\$7,125.00
40	First Baptist Church Batesville	Batesville	Carroll Baptist Association	\$7,066.38
41	Valden Baptist Church	Vaiden	Newton Baptist Association	\$6,754.69
42	First Baptist Church Newton	Newton	Smith County Baptist Association	\$6,483.00
43	Sylvania Baptist Church	Raleigh	Prentiss Baptist Association	\$6,445.24
44	First Baptist Church Hazlehurst	Hazlehurst	Warren Baptist Association	\$6,270.00
45	Thrasher Baptist Church	Vicksburg	Warren Baptist Association	\$6,230.20
46	Immanuel Baptist Church	Vicksburg	Union County Baptist Association	\$6,192.00
47	First Baptist Church Vickburg	Vicksburg	Mid-Delta Baptist Association	\$6,100.00
48	Fredonia Baptist Church	Drew	Marion Baptist Association	\$6,062.69
49	Drew Baptist Church	New Albany	Mid-Delta Baptist Association	\$5,975.43
50	Hurricane Creek Baptist Church	Sandy Hook	Lee Baptist Association	\$5,940.00
51	Parkway Baptist Church	Clinton	Adams Baptist Association	\$5,900.00
52	North Greenwood Baptist Church	Greenwood	Warren Baptist Association	\$5,800.00
53	First Baptist Church Nettleton	Nettleton	North Delta Baptist Association	\$5,796.00
54	First Baptist Church Yazoo City	Yazoo City	Leake Baptist Association	\$5,795.12
55	First Baptist Church Natchez	Natchez	Sharkley-Issaquena Baptist Assoc	\$5,694.82
56	Bovina Baptist Church	Vicksburg	Pearl River Baptist Association	\$5,681.91
57	Sand Hill Baptist Church	Sand Hill	Clarke Baptist Association	\$5,500.00
58	First Baptist Church Lambert	Ellisville	Lafayette Baptist Association	\$5,495.00
59	Pleasant Hill Baptist Church	Lambert	Mid-Tenn Mission Network	\$5,493.00
60	Valley Park Baptist Church	Carthage	Pontotoc County Baptist Assoc	\$5,400.00
61	First Baptist Church Picayune	Valley Park	Rankin Baptist Association	\$5,368.41
62	First Baptist Church Quitman	Picayune	Golden Triangle Baptist Assoc	\$5,347.36
63	Anchor Baptist Church	Quitman	Cov-Jeff Davis Baptist Assoc	\$5,335.00
64	First Baptist Church Senatobia	Water Valley	Ulico County Baptist Association	\$5,317.87
65	Valley Grove Baptist Church	Senatobia	Chickasaw-Baptist Association	\$5,311.84
66	Rock Hill Baptist Church	Tupelo	Alcorn Baptist Association	\$5,180.36
67	First Baptist Church Starkville	Brandon	Scott Baptist Association	\$5,122.70
68	Dublin Baptist Church	Starkville	Metro Baptist Association	\$5,116.00
69	Ingomar Baptist Church	Carson	Mid-Delta Baptist Association	\$5,072.93
70	Parkway Baptist Church	New Albany	Adams Baptist Association	\$5,000.04
71	Oakland Baptist Church	Houston	Lauderdale Baptist Association	\$4,885.23
72	Springfield Baptist Church	Corinth	Montgomery Baptist Association	\$4,882.00
73	First Baptist Church Greenville	Morton	X-Tended Mission Network	\$4,732.39
74	Calvary Baptist Church	Greenville	Walhall Baptist Association	\$4,601.31
75	Stanton Baptist Church	Bogue Chitto	Clarke Baptist Association	\$4,580.13
76	Northcrest Baptist Church	Natchez	Clark Baptist Association	\$4,549.71
77	North-Winona Baptist Church	Meridian	Metro Baptist Association	\$4,540.00
78	Church Road Baptist Church	Winona	Mid-Delta Baptist Association	\$4,481.37
79	Tylertown Baptist Church	Horn Lake	Golden Triangle Baptist Assoc	\$4,472.52
80	Bucatunna Baptist Church	Tylertown	Neshoba Baptist Association	\$4,449.63
81	Broadmoor Baptist Church	Meridian	Lawrence Baptist Association	\$4,418.68
82	Eastwood Baptist Church	Madison	Jackson Baptist Association	\$4,418.00
83	Mount Zion Baptist Church	Indiana	Sharkley-Issaquena Baptist Assoc	\$4,345.38
84	High Hill Baptist Church	Columbus	Washington County Baptist Assoc	\$4,336.63
85	Old Silver Creek Baptist Church	Philadelphia	Panola County Baptist Association	\$4,310.00
86	Calvary Baptist Church	Silver Creek	Winston Baptist Association	\$4,230.40
87	Hurley Baptist Church	Hurley	Scot Baptist Association	\$4,223.04
88	Deep Creek Baptist Church	Rolling Fork	Lauderdale Baptist Association	\$4,119.44
89	Hollandale Baptist Church	Hollandale	Marion Baptist Association	\$4,116.25
90	First Baptist Church Sardis	Sardis	Winston Baptist Association	\$4,109.00
91	First Baptist Church Louisville	Louisville		\$4,091.72
92	Branch Baptist Church	Morton		
93	Faith Baptist Church	Meridian		
94	Goodnews Baptist Church	Magee		
95	Foxworth Baptist Church	Foxworth		
96	Shiloh Baptist Church	Louisville		

97	Westwood Baptist Church	Meridian	Kemper Baptist Association	\$4,000.00
98	West Kemper Baptist Church	Laurel	Neshoba Baptist Association	\$3,992.87
99	County Line Baptist Church	Union	Lincoln Baptist Association	\$3,984.87
100	Wildwood Baptist Church	Brookhaven	Metro Baptist Association	\$3,957.25
101	First Baptist Church Brandon	Clinton	Rankin Baptist Association	\$3,932.99
102	Grays Creek Baptist Church	Brandon	X-Tended Mission Network	\$3,926.28
103	First Baptist Church Charleston	Charleston	North Central Baptist Association	\$3,919.47
104	First Baptist Church Abbeville	Abbeville	Lafayette Baptist Association	\$3,860.75
105	Ruleville Baptist Church	Ridgeville	Mid-Delta Baptist Association	\$3,860.52
106	Rocky Point Baptist Church	Carthage	Leake Baptist Association	\$3,800.00
107	First Baptist Church Poplarville	Poplarville	Pearl River Baptist Association	\$3,800.00
108	Pleasant Hill Baptist Church	Columbus	Golden Triangle Baptist Assoc	\$3,769.99
109	Beacon Street Baptist Church	Philadelphia	Neshoba Baptist Association	\$3,724.55
110	Rolling Creek Baptist Church	Quitman	Clarke Baptist Association	\$3,713.10
111	First Baptist Church New Albany	New Albany	Union County Baptist Association	\$3,665.76
112	Shiloh Baptist Church	Port Gibson	Union Baptist Association	\$3,657.50
113	Liberty Baptist Church	Eufora	Kemper Baptist Association	\$3,656.18
114	New Harmony Baptist Church	Kosciusko	Union County Baptist Association	\$3,654.38
115	Union Baptist Church	Union	Clarke Baptist Association	\$3,646.14
116	Friendship Baptist Church	Meridian	Pontotoc County Baptist Assoc	\$3,639.00
117	First Baptist Church Belzoni	Ecu	Humphreys Baptist Association	\$3,619.60
118	New Sight Baptist Church	Belzoni	Lincoln Baptist Association	\$3,588.26
119	Chaparral Baptist Church	Brookhaven	Waynesboro	\$3,568.48
120	Tommoni Baptist Church	Waynesboro	Eupora	\$3,528.11
121	Parkway Baptist Church	Eupora	At-Large	\$3,510.97
122	First Baptist Church Union	Carthage	Metro Baptist Association	\$3,500.00
123	Corinth Baptist Church	Harrisonville	Metra Baptist Association	\$3,465.00
124	Midway Baptist Church	Raymond	Gulf Coast Baptist Association	\$3,452.40
125	First Baptist Church Lyman	Eupora	Lee Baptist Association	\$3,444.47
126	Chesterville Baptist Church	Long Beach	Clarke Baptist Association	\$3,421.75
127	DeSoto Baptist Church	Long Beach	Webster Baptist Association	\$3,420.00
128	Manted Baptist Church	Mantee	Webster Baptist Association	\$3,400.49
129	Newhebron Baptist Church	Newhebron	Lawrence Baptist Association	\$3,385.11
130	Zion Baptist Church	Crystal Springs	Leake Baptist Association	\$3,346.00
131	Remus Baptist Church	Carthage	Metro Baptist Association	\$3,300.00
132	Unity Baptist Church	Harrisville	Webster Baptist Association	\$3,280.00
133	Salem Baptist Church	Raymond	Gulf Coast Baptist Association	\$3,270.18
134	First Baptist Church Eupora	Inverness	Calhoun Baptist Association	\$3,264.50
135	Mount Moriah Baptist Church	Corinth	X-Tended Mission Network	\$3,239.04
136	First Baptist Church Long Beach	Long Beach	Golden Triangle Baptist Assoc	\$3,200.00
137	Mount Moriah Baptist Church	Long Beach	Metro Baptist Association	\$3,200.00
138	Mountoria Baptist Church	Long Beach	Pike Baptist Association	\$3,178.87
139	Oakvale Baptist Church	Long Beach	Lincoln Baptist Association	\$3,157.00
140	Macedonia Baptist Church	Long Beach	Perry Baptist Association	\$3,141.26
141	Fairview Baptist Church	Long Beach	Golden Triangle Baptist Assoc	\$3,064.50
142	Hillcrest Baptist Church	Long Beach	Calhoun Baptist Association	\$3,063.00
143	Silver Creek Baptist Church	Long Beach	Warrick Baptist Association	\$3,050.00
144	Mount Moriah Baptist Church	Long Beach	Winston Baptist Association	\$3,022.00
145	Indianola Baptist Church	Long Beach	Scott Baptist Association	\$3,000.00
146	Holly Baptist Church	Long Beach	Humphreys Baptist Association	\$2,988.13
147	Friendship West Baptist Church	Long Beach	Alcorn Baptist Association	\$2,986.85
148	Liberty Baptist Church	Long Beach	North Central Baptist Association	\$2,980.88
149	Bethany Baptist Church	Long Beach	Winston Baptist Association	\$2,908.00
150	Highland Baptist Church	Long Beach	Pike Baptist Association	\$2,900.00
151	Crystal Ridge Baptist Church	Long Beach	Smith County Baptist Association	\$2,890.00
152	Ephesus Baptist Church	Long Beach	Carroll Baptist Association	\$2,881.80
153	Beulah Baptist Church	Long Beach	Cow-Jeff Davis Baptist Association	\$2,881.02
154	Holly Baptist Church	Long Beach	Newton Baptist Association	\$2,880.00
155	Friendship West Baptist Church	Long Beach	George-Greenie Baptist Assoc	\$2,880.00
156	Liberty Baptist Church	Long Beach	Mid-Delta Baptist Association	\$2,770.76
157	North Oxford Baptist Church	Long Beach	Jones Baptist Association	\$2,765.75
158	Pleasant Hill Baptist Church	Long Beach	Neshoba Baptist Association	\$2,762.74
159	Fair River Baptist Church	Long Beach	Franklin Baptist Association	\$2,752.00
160	Fine Baptist Church Mathiston	Long Beach	Panola County Baptist Association	\$2,750.00
161	Fine Baptist Church Raleigh	Long Beach	Webster Baptist Association	\$2,750.00
162	Bethlehem Baptist Church	Long Beach	Smith County Baptist Association	\$2,750.00
163	Harmony Baptist Church	Long Beach	Alcorn Baptist Association	\$2,747.45
164	Clear Springs Baptist Church	Long Beach	Rankin Baptist Association	\$2,743.45
165	Mount Pisgah Baptist Church	Long Beach	Yazoo Baptist Association	\$2,741.50
166	Ebenezer Baptist Church	Long Beach	Smith County Baptist Association	\$2,733.99
167	Chinkley Baptist Church	Long Beach	Carroll Baptist Association	\$2,732.26
168	Chukky Baptist Church	Long Beach	Cow-Jeff Davis Baptist Association	\$2,731.02
169	First Baptist Church Sand Hill	Long Beach	Newton Baptist Association	\$2,729.00
170	Old Pearl Valley Baptist Church	Long Beach	Pike Baptist Association	\$2,728.00
171	First Baptist Church Indiana	Long Beach	Rankin Baptist Association	\$2,727.76
172	Pineview Baptist Church	Long Beach	Yazoo Baptist Association	\$2,727.00
173	First Baptist Church Madison	Long Beach	Smith County Baptist Association	\$2,726.74
174	Trinity Baptist Church	Long Beach	Franklin Baptist Association	\$2,725.00
175	Madenville Baptist Church	Long Beach	Batesville	\$2,725.00
176	Calvary Baptist Church	Long Beach	Eupora	\$2,725.00
177	Calvary Baptist Church	Long Beach	Waynesboro	\$2,725.00
178	Star Baptist Church	Long Beach	Star	\$2,725.00
179	New Hope Baptist Church	Long Beach	Gulfport	\$2,724.50
180	First Baptist Church Satartia	Long Beach	Satartia	\$2,724.00
181	Zion Hill Baptist Church	Long Beach	Blue Springs	\$2,723.50
182	Mount Zion Baptist Church	Long Beach	Meridian	\$2,689.87
183	McCool Baptist Church	Long Beach	McCool	\$2,672.62
184	Grace Memorial Baptist Church	Long Beach	Gulfport	\$2,665.00
185	Pleasant Dale Baptist Church	Long Beach	Eta	\$2,665.00
186	Arm Baptist Church	Long Beach	Silver Creek	\$2,675.00
187	Fellowship Baptist Church	Long Beach	Ellisville	\$2,674.70
188	Cain Baptist Church	Long Beach	Cain Baptist Church	\$2,674.00
189	Harmony Baptist Church	Long Beach	Carrollton	\$2,674.00
190	Phila Baptist Church	Long Beach	Benton-Tippah Baptist Association	\$2,673.45
191	First Baptist Church State Line	Long Beach	Cov-Jeff Davis Baptist Association	\$2,673.00
192	Central Baptist Church	Long Beach	Wayne Baptist Association	\$2,659.04
193	Cumberland Baptist Church	Long Beach	Pearl River Baptist Association	\$2,658.44
194	Union Hall Baptist Church	Long Beach	Lincoln Baptist Association	\$2,658.00
195	Macedonia Baptist Church	Long Beach	Webster Baptist Association	\$2,657.60
196	Beulah Baptist Church	Long Beach	Levi Baptist Association	\$2,657.57
197	Sallis Baptist Church	Long Beach	Sallis Baptist	\$2,657.26
198	Bethsaida Baptist Church	Long Beach	Philadelphia	\$2,650.00
199	Temple Baptist Church	Long Beach	Neshoba Baptist Association	\$2,650.00
200	Oak Forest Baptist Church	Long Beach	Lebanon Baptist Association	\$2,650.00
201	West End Baptist Church	Long Beach	Metro Baptist Association	\$2,497.87
202	New Bethel Baptist Church	Long Beach	Golden Triangle Baptist Assoc	\$2,489.74
203	Clarke Venable Baptist Church	Long Beach	Carroll Baptist Association	\$2,485.05
204	Calvary Baptist Church	Long Beach	Decatur	\$2,477.48
205	Ellard Baptist Church	Long Beach	Greenwood	\$2,477.48
206	New Liberty Baptist Church	Long Beach	Bruce	\$2,477.48
207	Evergreen Baptist Church	Long Beach	Vardaman	\$2,477.48
208	Macedonia Baptist Church	Long Beach	Louisville	\$2,477.48
209	Bethel Baptist Church	Long Beach	Myrtle	\$2,477.48
210	Bethel Baptist Church	Long Beach	Poplarville	\$2,477.48
211	Carverville Baptist Church			

229	First Baptist Church Lumberton	Lamar Baptist Association	\$2,170.78	361	New Prospect Baptist Church	Iuka	Tishomingo County Baptist Assoc	\$1,410.00
230	Isola Baptist Church	Isola	\$2,159.68	362	West Union Baptist Church	Carriere	Pearl River Baptist Association	\$1,409.79
231	Crossgates Baptist Church	Brandon	\$2,154.00	363	Shiloh Baptist Church	Houka	Chickasaw Baptist Association	\$1,408.38
232	Berea Baptist Church	McCool	\$2,138.59	364	New Prospect Baptist Church	Brookhaven	Lincoln Baptist Association	\$1,400.31
233	End Lake Baptist Church	Pope	\$2,110.00	365	Glenfield Baptist Church	New Albany	Union County Baptist Association	\$1,400.00
234	Woolmarket Baptist Church	Biloxi	\$2,109.90	366	First Baptist Church Flora	Flora	Metro Baptist Association	\$1,387.87
235	Crowder Baptist Church	Crowder	\$2,103.40	367	Twin Lakes Baptist Church	Madison	Metro Baptist Association	\$1,387.00
236	Pine Grove Baptist Church	Picayune	\$2,103.00	368	Parkway Baptist Church	Natchez	Adams Baptist Association	\$1,382.00
237	Horsehoe Baptist Church	Tchula	\$2,100.00	369	Union Baptist Church	Picayune	Pearl River Baptist Association	\$1,380.56
238	Midway Baptist Church	Meridian	\$2,070.06	370	Gallifree First Baptist Church	Gloster	Mississippi Baptist Association	\$1,378.69
239	Whitesand Baptist Church	Prentiss	\$2,070.00	371	West Jackson Street Church	Tupelo	Lee Baptist Association	\$1,375.00
240	Gatesville Baptist Church	Crystal Springs	\$2,060.84	372	County Line Baptist Church	Carthage	Astila Baptist Association	\$1,373.00
241	First Baptist Church Houston	Houston	\$2,059.00	373	Calvary Baptist Church	Belmont	Tishomingo County Baptist Assoc	\$1,371.72
242	Crane Creek Baptist Church	Perkins	\$2,036.01	374	Pilgrim's Rest Baptist Church	Crystal Springs	Copiah Baptist Association	\$1,371.00
243	First Baptist Church Collinsville	Collinsville	\$2,028.10	375	Pine Grove Baptist Church	Dumas	Benton-Tippah Baptist Association	\$1,370.72
244	Elliottstown Baptist Church	Blue Springs	\$2,025.00	376	Central Baptist Church	Byram	Metro Baptist Association	\$1,363.24
245	First Baptist Church Columbia	Columbia	\$2,005.70	377	Enon Baptist Church	Louisville	Winston Baptist Association	\$1,360.00
246	Ocoba Baptist Church	Philadelphia	\$2,000.00	378	Hillcrest Baptist Church	New Albany	Union County Baptist Association	\$1,360.00
247	Oak View Baptist Church	Terry	\$2,000.00	379	Roxie Baptist Church	Rosie	Franklin Baptist Association	\$1,355.71
248	Good Hope Baptist Church	Louisville	\$2,000.00	380	Mount Olive Baptist Church	Smithdale	Mississippi Baptist Association	\$1,354.00
249	Walhall Baptist Church	Walhall	\$2,000.00	381	Providence Baptist Church	Hattiesburg	Lebanon Baptist Association	\$1,354.00
250	Providence Baptist Church	Ackerman	\$2,000.00	382	Pulaski Baptist Church	Pulaski	Scott Baptist Association	\$1,347.39
251	Mars Hill Baptist Church	Philadelphia	\$2,000.00	383	First Baptist Church Louise	Louis	Humphreys Baptist Association	\$1,344.00
252	Short Creek Baptist Church	Yazoo City	\$2,000.00	384	Georgetown Baptist Church	Georgetown	Copiah Baptist Association	\$1,341.70
253	First Baptist Church Amory	Amory	\$1,999.98	385	Romeo Baptist Church	Tutwiler	Mid-Delta Baptist Association	\$1,325.00
254	Arbor Grove Baptist Church	Houston	\$1,995.00	386	Bethany Baptist Church	Ports Camp	Marshall Baptist Association	\$1,322.56
255	First Baptist Church Bay St. Louis	Bay St. Louis	\$1,992.41	387	Camp Creek Baptist Church	Cuntown	Lee Baptist Association	\$1,318.70
256	Shiloh Baptist Church	Big Creek	\$1,982.56	388	Mount Pleasant Baptist Church	Glover	Mississippi Baptist Association	\$1,316.20
257	Northside Baptist Church	Lucedale	\$1,968.77	389	Central Grove Baptist Church	Aberdeen	Monroe Baptist Association	\$1,305.00
258	Oak Hill Baptist Church	Booneville	\$1,959.77	390	Wheeler Grove Baptist Church	Corinth	Alcorn Baptist Association	\$1,300.00
259	Union Baptist Church	Mize	\$1,956.62	391	First Baptist Church Belmont	Belmont	Tishomingo County Baptist Assoc	\$1,300.00
260	Eastside Baptist Church	Pearl	\$1,949.00	392	Burns Baptist Church	Raleigh	Smith County Baptist Association	\$1,300.00
261	Calvary Baptist Church	Corinth	\$1,947.55	393	Autumn Ridge Baptist Church	Hattiesburg	Lamar Baptist Association	\$1,300.00
262	First Baptist Church Buckatunna	Buckatunna	\$1,945.00	394	Mount Pleasant Baptist Church	West	Holman-Baird Association	\$1,300.00
263	Arkabutla Baptist Church	Arkabutla	\$1,908.63	395	First Baptist Church Magnolia	Magnolia	Pike Baptist Association	\$1,296.37
264	Friendship Baptist Church	Sturgis	\$1,900.00	396	Big Level Baptist Church	Wiggins	Gulf Coast Baptist Association	\$1,290.66
265	Tishomingo Baptist Church	Tishomingo	\$1,900.00	397	Hathorn Baptist Church	Columbia	Cov-Jeff Davis Baptist Association	\$1,290.00
266	Gum Grove Baptist Church	Brookhaven	\$1,886.50	398	Mount Pisgah Baptist Church	Eupora	Choctaw Baptist Association	\$1,287.36
267	Union Baptist Church	Sardis	\$1,866.05	399	Sunrise Baptist Church	Carthage	Leake Baptist Association	\$1,278.00
268	First Baptist Church Grenada	Grenada	\$1,855.00	400	Enterprise Baptist Church	Enterprise	Clarke Baptist Association	\$1,266.37
269	Mount Vernon Baptist Church	Tupelo	\$1,850.00	401	First Baptist Church Collins	Collins	Cov-Jeff Davis Baptist Association	\$1,263.00
270	French Camp Baptist Church	French Camp	\$1,848.77	402	Mount Vernon Baptist Church	Newton	Newton Baptist Association	\$1,263.00
271	Standing Pine Baptist Church	Walnut Grove	\$1,839.59	403	South Crossroads Baptist Church	Iuka	Tishomingo County Baptist Assoc	\$1,260.00
272	Tuscumbia Baptist Church	Booneville	\$1,837.00	404	Midway Baptist Church	Carthage	Leake Baptist Association	\$1,250.00
273	West Ripley Baptist Church	Ripley	\$1,830.00	405	Oakland Baptist Church	Walnut	Benton-Tippah Baptist Association	\$1,245.60
274	Kennedy Springs Baptist Church	Magee	\$1,830.00	406	Oldtown Baptist Church	Pittsboro	Calhoun Baptist Association	\$1,244.00
275	Carriage Hills Baptist Church	Southaven	\$1,812.23	407	Pilgrim's Rest Baptist Church	Houka	Calhoun Baptist Association	\$1,236.73
276	First Baptist Church Coldwater	Coldwater	\$1,801.00	408	Hickory Ridge Baptist Church	Florence	Rankin Baptist Association	\$1,225.00
277	Mount Zion Baptist Church	Taylorville	\$1,800.00	409	First Baptist Church Taylorville	Taylorville	Smith County Baptist Association	\$1,219.42
278	Interstate Baptist Church	Shaw	\$1,799.66	410	Salem Baptist Church	Golden	Itawamba Baptist Association	\$1,215.00
279	Main Street Baptist Church	Goodman	\$1,799.20	411	Temple Baptist Church	Myrtle	Union County Baptist Association	\$1,213.00
280	Macedonia Baptist Church	Brookhaven	\$1,795.15	412	West Salem Baptist Church	Richton	George-Greene Baptist Assoc	\$1,211.00
281	West Heights Baptist Church	Pontotoc	\$1,795.06	413	Center Hill Baptist Church	Ecr	Pomotoc County Baptist Assoc	\$1,208.23
282	Cedar Grove Baptist Church	Columbia	\$1,779.62	414	First Baptist Church Biloxi	Biloxi	Calhoun Baptist Association	\$1,204.00
283	Scotland Baptist Church	Winona	\$1,776.88	415	Immanuel Baptist Church	Greenwood	Mid-Delta Baptist Association	\$1,200.00
284	Premise Baptist Church	Prentiss	\$1,773.82	416	Good Hope Baptist Church	Richton	Perry Baptist Association	\$1,200.00
285	Jacob's Well Inc.	Diamondhead	\$1,764.10	417	Mount Zion Baptist Church	Florence	Rankin Baptist Association	\$1,200.00
286	Shugualak Baptist Church	Shugualak	\$1,750.00	418	First Baptist Church Oloh	Summerville	Lamar Baptist Association	\$1,200.00
287	White Oak Baptist Church	Carthage	\$1,737.00	419	Calvary West Point Baptist Church	Baldwyn	Golden Triangle Baptist Assoc	\$1,200.00
288	Cornerstone Baptist Chu	Batesville	\$1,722.27	420	New Black Jack Baptist Church	Holiday	Neshoba Baptist Association	\$1,200.00
289	Faith Baptist Church	Senatobia	\$1,716.29	421	Friendship Baptist Church	Carthage	Lincoln Baptist Association	\$1,200.00
290	Unity Baptist Church	McComb	\$1,704.43	422	Crossview Baptist Church	Waineworth	Clarke Baptist Association	\$1,200.00
291	Christ Baptist Church	Louis	\$1,700.00	423	County Line Baptist Church	Southaven	Rankin Baptist Association	\$1,200.00
292	Spring Hill Baptist Church	Decatur	\$1,690.18	424	Leaf Baptist Church	Liberty	Copiah Baptist Association	\$1,200.00
293	Desoto Hills Baptist Church	Sturgis	\$1,682.52	425	Parkview Baptist Church	Phoebe	George-Greene Baptist Assoc	\$1,200.00
294	Bethel Baptist Church	Etta	\$1,679.78	426	Liberty Baptist Church	Tyler	Washington County Baptist Assoc	\$1,200.00
295	Flat Top Union Baptist Church	Picayune	\$1,670.00	427	East Pleasant Grove Baptist Church	Baldwyn	Scott Baptist Association	\$1,200.00
296	Tuscaloosa Baptist Church	Lena	\$1,670.00	428	Calvary Baptist Church	Quitman	Lincoln Baptist Association	\$1,200.00
297	Siloam Baptist Church	McComb	\$1,669.34	429	West Shady Grove Baptist Church	Quitman	Clarke Baptist Association	\$1,200.00
298	Navilla Baptist Church	Pike	\$1,658.78	430	First Baptist Church Macon	Waynesboro	Wayne Baptist Association	\$1,200.00
299	Leaf River Baptist Church	Newton	\$1,655.00	431	Magnolia Baptist Church	Southaven	X-Tended Mission Network	\$1,200.00
300	Beulah Baptist Church	Newton	\$1,655.00	432	New Providence Baptist Church	Liberty	Mississippi Baptist Association	\$1,200.00
301	Sturgis Baptist Church	Europa	\$1,650.00	433	Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church	Hebron	Golden Triangle Baptist Assoc	\$1,200.00
302	Pilgrim's Rest Baptist Church	Pittsboro	\$1,640.00	434	Dry Creek Baptist Church	Bridwell	Pike Baptist Association	\$1,200.00
303	First Baptist Church Pittsboro	Oxford	\$1,635.56	435	Holly Springs Baptist Church	Holiday	Benton-Tippah Baptist Association	\$1,200.00
304	Union West Baptist Church	Bogue Chitto	\$1,632.00	436	First Baptist Church Macor	Carthage	Marion Baptist Association	\$1,194.12
305	Bogue Chitto Baptist Church	Pucket	\$1,631.00	437	Rankin Baptist Association	Waineworth	Noxubee Baptist Association	\$1,165.00
306	Pucket Baptist Church	Pucket	\$1,629.79	438	Magnolia Baptist Church	Southaven	Jones Baptist Association	\$1,162.00
307	Longview Heights Baptist Church	Olive Branch	\$1,628.53	439	New Providence Baptist Church	Calhoun	Vardaman	\$1,160.00
308	First Baptist Church Terry	Terry	\$1,625.77	440	Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church	Bruce	Calhoun Baptist Association	\$1,149.25
309	Causeyville Baptist Church	Meridian	\$1,611.45	441	Duck Hill Baptist Church	Duck Hill	Montgomery Baptist Association	\$1,141.72
310	Belen Baptist Church	Mc-Ks	\$1,610.11	442	First Baptist Church Coffeyville	Coffeyville	Yalobusha Baptist Association	\$1,130.00
311	Society Hill Baptist Church	Oak	\$1,610.00	443	Water Oak Baptist Church	Waynesboro	Wayne Baptist Association	\$1,120.94
312	First Baptist Church Carthage	Carthage	\$1,610.00	444	Calvary Baptist Church	Calhoun	Marshall Baptist Association	\$1,120.03
313	Morrison Chapel Baptist Church	Cleveland	\$1,600.20	445	Duncan Hill Baptist Church	Gulfport	Pontotoc County Baptist Assoc	\$1,100.00
314	Pleasant Grove Baptist Church	Woodland	\$1,600.00	446	Furr Baptist Church	Water Valley	Lincoln Baptist Association	\$1,100.00
315	Alta Woods Baptist Church	Jackson	\$1,600.00	447	Moak's Creek Baptist Church	Southaven	Summit	\$1,100.00
316	First Baptist Church Tchula	Tchula	\$1,600.00	448	Parkway Baptist Church	Hernando	Mississippi Baptist Association	\$1,099.96
317	Pope Baptist Church	Pope	\$1,600.00	449	Enterprise Baptist Church	Liberty	Golden Triangle Baptist Assoc	\$1,099.00
318	Bluff Springs Baptist Church	Dekalb	\$1,600.00	450	Bartow First Baptist Church	Byhalia	Marshall Baptist Association	\$1,097.00
319	Ebenezer Baptist Church	Kosciusko	\$1,600.00	451	Oak Grove Baptist Church	Meredian	Lauderdale Baptist Association	\$1,096.00
320	Arlington Baptist Church	Bogue Chitto	\$1,582.00	452	Magie's Creek Baptist Church	Walthall	Baptist Association	\$1,082.25
321	First Baptist Church Bude	Bude	\$1,579.60	453	New Haven Baptist Church	Carthage	Clarke Baptist Association	\$1,080.00
322	Oak Dale Baptist Church	Pontotoc	\$1,575.68	454	Myrick Baptist Church	Smithdale	Jones Baptist Association	\$1,078.52
323	Scooba Baptist Church	Scooba	\$1,575.00	455	Hebron Baptist Church	Brooksville	Noxubee Baptist Association	\$1,073.52
324	Corinth Baptist Church	Raleigh	\$1,575.00	456	Brooksville Baptist Church	Pearl	Rankin Baptist Association	\$1,070.12
325	Bethlehem Baptist Church	Benton	\$1,570.00	457	First Baptist Church Pearl	Booneville	Rankin Baptist Association	\$1,059.00
326	Bethlehem Baptist Church	Benton	\$1,565.72	458	Candles Chaper B-pis Church	Bay Springs	Prentiss Baptist Association	\$1,054.60
327	Gladding Baptist Church	D-Loo	\$1,563.51	459	Mount Nebo Baptist Church	Corinth	Jasper Baptist Association	\$1,054.05
328	Calvary Baptist Church	Newton	\$1,563.43	460	Mount Gildead Baptist Church	Meridian	Lauderdale Baptist Association	\$1,053.00
329	Main Street Baptist Church	Hattiesburg	\$1,563.30	461	Corinth Baptist Church	Carthage	Leake Baptist Association	\$1,050.00
330	Meadowood Baptist Church	Amory	\$1,558.26	462	New Bethlehem Baptist Church	Mendenhall	Simsong Baptist Association	\$1,050.00
331	First Baptist Church Bruce	Bruce	\$1,558.26	463	Mount Vernon Baptist Church	Marion	Golden Triangle Baptist Assoc	\$1,045.00
332	Antioch Baptist Church	Louis	\$1,550.00	464	First Baptist Church Marion	Connith	Lauderdale Baptist Association	\$1,042.96
333	Philippi Baptist Church	Tchula	\$1,550.00	465	Brush Creek Baptist Church	Raleigh	Alcorn Baptist Association	\$1,040.00
334	Lexis Baptist Church	Phillip	\$1,550.00	466	Salem Baptist Church	Holy Springs	Smith County Baptist Association	\$1,039.28
335	Mount Vernon Baptist Church	Tylertown	\$1,545.00	467	First Baptist Church Holly Springs	Gulfport	Marshall Baptist Association	\$1,036.00
336	Longview Baptist Church	Belden	\$1,537.00	468	Peace Baptist Church	Gulfport	Gulf Coast Baptist Association	\$1,033.24
337	First Baptist Church Brooklyn	Brooklyn	\$1,529.79	469	First Baptist Church McComb	Gulfport	Pike Baptist Association	\$1,032.24
338	Melrose Baptist Church	Benton	\$1,527.00	470	Sylvia Remi Baptist Church	Water Valley	Valobousha Baptist Association	\$1,031.50
339	Spring Hill Baptist Church	Oakland	\$1,525.00	471	Boulevard Baptist Church	Southaven	X-Tended Mission Network	\$1,031.00
340	Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church	Dumas	\$1,518.76	472	Morgan Chapel Baptist Church	Sturgis	Golden Triangle Baptist Assoc	\$1,029.02
341	Wesson Baptist Church	Wesson	\$1,515.95	473	New Salem Baptist Church	Columbus	Golden Triangle Baptist Assoc	\$1,006.93
342	Siloam Baptist Church	Meadville	\$1,501.18	474	First Baptist Church Byram	Byram	Metro Baptist Association	\$1,000.00
343	West McComb Baptist Church	McComb	\$1,500.00	475	Birmingham Baptist Church	Carrollton	Lee Baptist Association	\$1,000.00
344	New Bethel Baptist Church	Philadelphia	\$1,500.00	476	Hephzibah Baptist Church	Shubuta	Clarke Baptist Association	\$1,000.00
345	Good Hope Baptist Church	Philadelphia	\$1,500.00	477	North Carrollton Baptist Church	North Carrollton	Carroll Baptist Association	\$1,000.00
346	First Baptist Church Ellisville	Ellisville	\$1,500.00	478	Ecu Baptist Church	Ecu	Carroll Baptist Association	\$1,000.00
347	Union Baptist Church	Roxie	\$1,500.00	479	Antioch Baptist Church	Golden	Pointor County Baptist Assoc	\$1,000.00
348	Crystal Springs Baptist Church	Tyler	\$1,500.00	480	South Louisville Baptist Church	Louisville	Itawamba Baptist Association	\$1,000.00
349	Trinity Baptist Church	Fulton	\$1,500.00	481	Thompson Baptist Church	Smithdale	Marion Baptist Association	\$1,000.00
350	New Liberty Baptist Church	Morton	\$1,500.00	482	Conway Baptist Church	Carthage	Smith County Baptist Association	\$1,000.00
351	Roundaway Baptist Church	Doddsville	\$1,500.00	483	Benito Baptist Church	Benoit	Leake Baptist Association	\$1,000.00
352	Tate Baptist Church	Corinth	\$1,498.00	484	Meadow Grove Baptist Church	Brandan	Mid-Delta Baptist Association	\$1,000.00
353	DeKalb Baptist Church	De Kalb	\$1,490.00	485	First Baptist Church Polkville	Morton	Smith County Baptist Association</	

# Survey: church still top choice on game day

NASHVILLE (BP) — Most American churchgoers would rather attend church than watch their favorite football team, a LifeWay Research study shows, but a few die-hard fans are willing to miss out on worship.

Researchers found most of the faithful balk at skipping church for football. Eighty-three percent disagree with the statement: "I would skip a weekly worship service in order to watch my favorite football team." Fifteen percent of those surveyed said they'd skip church in order to watch their favorite football team, according to the survey of 994 churchgoers.

Many worshipers had particularly strong feelings. Sixty-eight percent strongly disagreed. "Most churchgoers put divine revelation ahead of division rivalries," said Scott McConnell, vice-president of Nashville-based LifeWay Research.

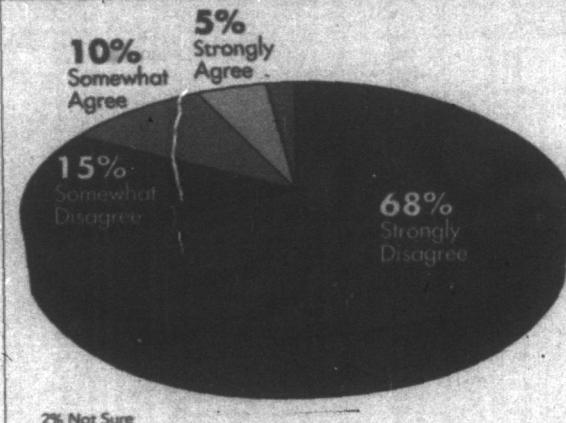
Some churchgoers, though, are more devoted to their team, especially when the team is doing well. Two years ago, Daniel Espy, pastor of The Bridge Church in Snohomish, Wash., hosted a special 8 a.m. service in order to accommodate Seahawks fans, whose team had found success after years of struggling.

The early service started as a joke on the church's Facebook page. Espy joked that all churches in Seattle should hold early services so fans could worship and then watch a playoff game. The idea took off and eventually landed the church on the front page of the local newspaper.

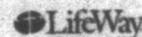
These days, The Bridge has two services, making it easier for church members to worship before games. However, attendance still goes down when the Seahawks have an early game. "Attendance can swing about

Among Churchgoers:

"I would skip a weekly worship service to watch my favorite football team."



LifeWayResearch.com



"Most churchgoers put divine revelation ahead of division rivalries."

Scott McConnell  
vice-president of LifeWay Research

30-40%, depending on kickoff," Espy said.

The Seahawks will defend their 2014 National Football League championship title on Feb. 1 in the Super Bowl against the New England Patriots, who are vying for their fourth championship title. The game will be played at the 63,400-seat University of Phoenix stadium in Glendale, Ariz.

LifeWay Research found faithful football fans in the West (22%) are more willing to skip church than those in South (13%) or Northeast (13%).

Twenty-two percent of church-going men said they'd skip church to watch football. That drops to 10% for women churchgoers. Catholic football fans (20%) are more willing to skip church than evangelicals (12%).

Espy said he's taken a good-natured approach to those who skip church to watch football. He notes that works better than a guilt trip. "Honestly, we just try to show people that Jesus is better than football," he said.



NURSE

## Former missionary gets two years in jail for fraud

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Former Southern Baptist missionary Brady Nurse has been sentenced to two years in prison for obtaining nearly \$300,000 in mission funds by submitting fraudulent expense reports to the International Mission Board (IMB).

Three years of supervised release will follow the sentence, handed down Jan. 21 by U.S. Eastern District (Virginia) Judge James R. Spencer.

Nurse, a 38-year-old resident of Bothell, Wash., pled guilty Oct. 21 to obtaining the funds in fabricated expenses from 2008-13 while working as a logistics and

business coordinator for IMB in Portugal. He resigned from IMB in January 2014. Nurse and his wife Andrea had served as IMB missionaries since March 2006.

In pleading guilty, Nurse signed a statement acknowledging that he:

■ "routinely altered" amounts on valid documents and invoices submitted on expense reports to increase his reimbursement.

■ "submitted fraudulent, manufactured, and/or duplicated documentation" on expense reports.

■ "falsely represented" quotes and estimates for service from vendors as services actu-

ally provided, rather than lower amounts actually charged.

■ altered documentation associated with household shipping charges "to obtain additional benefit from an increase shipping allowance."

■ falsely obtained reimbursement for non-reimbursable expenses.

After his resignation as a missionary, Nurse continued to seek reimbursement for "suspect shipping expenses by false statements submitted to IMB through interstate emails," according to the IMB statement.

He also received nearly \$21,000 in additional funds through a clerical error by the board's benefits department and has yet to return those funds, IMB reported.

IMB became aware in January 2014 of "suspicious transactions" by Nurse related to shipping of household items from Portugal to the United States, according to court documents.

IMB's internal audit staff began a full-scale review of Nurse's reimbursement requests, comparing them with original documents obtained from Portugal.

Results of the internal review were reported to the FBI, which began an investigation.

"We are deeply grieved that one sent out to proclaim the free gift of the Gospel would violate the sacred trust placed in him by Southern Baptists," IMB general counsel Derek Gaubatz said upon Nurse's guilty plea in October. "IMB believes it is ap-

propriate that Mr. Nurse face accountability for his actions and fully supports his prosecution under federal law.

"At the same time, IMB takes no joy in that prosecution. IMB is praying for Mr. Nurse and his family that they would experience the mercy of God in a fresh way."

The mission board "takes its role as a steward over Southern Baptist resources given for missions very seriously," Gaubatz said. "While both IMB's external auditors and the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA) have independently verified that IMB has robust anti-fraud measures in place, IMB will be seeking their input on any additional measures they would recommend."